



Compact Fluorescent Bulbs (CFLs)

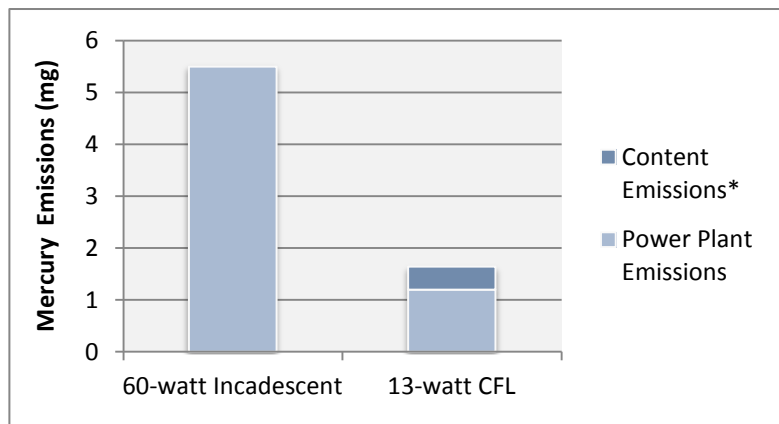
What are the benefits to using CFLs?

CFLs can save up to 75% in energy use compared to traditional incandescent light bulbs. Since lighting accounts for about 20% of a home's electric bill, this can add up to significant cost savings. CFLs can also last up to 10 times longer than a traditional incandescent bulb, saving you time and effort in changing out those hard-to-reach fixtures around the house.

CFLs have dropped in cost considerably in recent years providing a quick return on investment. Using a 60-watt incandescent bulb for 8,000 hours will cost a home owner on average \$48. The equivalent CFL (13 watt) would only cost \$10.40 over the same time frame.

How can CFLs actually help reduce mercury emissions?

Since the main source of mercury emissions in the U.S. is from generating electricity, using less energy will help reduce mercury emissions. See the chart below to see how CFLs compare to incandescent bulbs.



*Assuming 11% of lamp mercury content lost as emissions to air/water.

What do I do with my burnt out CFL?

Recycle it, of course! Most Ace Hardware, True Value, Home Depot or Lowes stores will recycle your bulb for free. You may also contact your county to see if they have a household hazardous waste collection program that would accept these bulbs. When transporting CFLs to be recycled, be sure to place each bulb in a sealable plastic bag.

How do CFLs compare with LED (Light Emitting Diode) bulbs?

LED technology is improving rapidly and there are a number of LED bulbs currently available on the market. LED bulbs save energy, last even longer than CFLs and contain no mercury making them a great choice for the environment. Unfortunately, the high cost of LED bulbs remains a barrier for many consumers. As prices began to decline, we will likely see a shift to LED bulbs in the future.

I have heard that there is mercury in CFLs. Is this true?

There is a small amount of mercury in CFLs to help them produce light. But did you know that this amount is less than 1/6 of the amount found in a common watch battery? The mercury in a CFL is used to help create the light and is completely contained in the fluorescent tube. The following is a chart that compares the mercury content of CFLs to other common household products:

| Product | Amount Mercury |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| CFL | 4 mg |
| Watch Battery | 25 mg |
| Dental Amalgams | 500 mg |
| Home Thermometer | 500 to 2,000 mg |
| Float Switch in Sump Pump | 2,000 mg |

What should I do if my CFL breaks?

- Keep the area well ventilated by opening a window.
- Remove all materials you can without using a vacuum cleaner. This can be done by carefully scooping up the glass fragments and powder with a stiff piece of paper or cardboard or using sticky tape (or duct tape) to pick up small pieces.
- Place the broken pieces in a sealable plastic bag and wipe the area with a damp paper towel or disposable wet wipe to pick up any stray shards of glass or fine particles. Place towels in sealable plastic bag as well.
- The first time you vacuum over the area where clean up was done, remove the vacuum bag (or empty the waste canister) and dispose of in a plastic bag and place in the outside trash. You may also cut out the contaminated section of carpet and place in a sealed plastic bag.
- Be sure to wash your hands after you're done cleaning.
- Contact your local Household Hazardous Waste Program for mercury disposal information.